

PRESS RELEASE

## Fritz Lang's Masterpiece 'Destiny' Shines in All-New Brilliance

- **New version of the silent movie classic for movie theaters, TV, festivals and home entertainment**
- **Many well-known personalities expected at Bertelsmann's reception following the Berlinale screening**

Berlin, February 12, 2016 – Restored coloration, previously lost intertitles and new film music: Thanks to a digital restoration, the silent movie "Destiny" by master director Fritz Lang shines in new splendor after nearly a century. The digital restoration was carried out by the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation as the rights owner, and funded by the international media company Bertelsmann as the main sponsor. It took over a year to complete and was preceded by research in film archives around the world. In 2014, Bertelsmann and the Murnau Foundation had already digitally restored Robert Wiene's silent movie classic "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari".

The world premiere of the digital version of "Destiny" with new symphonic movie music takes place today, Friday at the Friedrichstadt-Palast as part of the "Berlinale Classics" program. After the premiere, Bertelsmann is hosting a reception at Bertelsmann Unter den Linden 1, Berlin, to which numerous well-known personalities from culture, the media, politics, business and society have been invited. Prominent actors, ambassadors, representatives of the Berlin cultural scene and other personages from city life have confirmed their attendance.

"As a creative company with a long tradition in the movie business, by again sponsoring a prominent movie restoration we want to make it clear that culturally and historically significant works need protection and movie archives need more support in preserving our movie heritage", said Bertelsmann Chairman & CEO Thomas Rabe. He pointed out that Lang's early masterpiece comes from the historic legacy of the old Ufa, the forerunner of Bertelsmann's present-day production company UFA.

"In 1921 Fritz Lang set new standards with 'Destiny', and created a universally celebrated masterpiece of Weimar cinema", said Ernst Szebedits, Chairman of the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation. "For decades, the movie was only a shadow of its former self, because unfortunately no dyed copies from the 1920s had survived. Therefore, it is a great pleasure to introduce this outstanding movie from the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation inventory in our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. As with all major restoration projects, this is only possible in cooperation with partners. Thanks to the digital restoration and the new music, we can now re-experience this classic in movie theaters, at festivals or at home."

From March 11, 2016, a restored version of Fritz Lang's "Destiny" including bonus material will be available on DVD, from the Bertelsmann subsidiary Universum Film.

“Destiny”, filmed shortly after the First World War, is regarded as a reflection on the traumas of the war. Images as gloomy as they are fantastical tell the story of a young woman who must pass tests to reclaim her lover from Death. This haunting work established Fritz Lang as one of Germany’s leading directors and earned him international acclaim.

For the restoration, the Murnau Foundation used sources from the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Munich Film Museum and the Národní filmový Archive in Prague, among others. In addition to Bertelsmann as the main sponsor, the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media and the Friends of the Murnau Foundation sponsored the project. ZDF/ARTE is responsible for the new film music, which is conducted by silent movie specialist Frank Strobel and performed by the renowned Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra (RSB); it was composed by Cornelius Schwehr. ARTE will broadcast the restored movie at 11:55 PM on February 15, 2016.

#### **About Bertelsmann**

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the broadcaster RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the music company BMG, and the Bertelsmann Education Group. The company has more than 112,000 employees and generated revenues of €16.7 billion in financial year 2014. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world.

#### **About the Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau Foundation**

As an archive and rights holder the Murnau Foundation curates a significant part of Germany’s movie heritage. Its most important endowment is the unique, cohesive movie stock, which comprises copies and material as well as rights from the former production companies UFA, Decla, Universum-Film, Bavaria, Terra, Tobis and Berlin-Film. This outstanding inventory of cultural and film history – more than 6,000 silent movies and sound films (feature films, documentaries, short movies and commercials) – covers the period from the beginnings of motion pictures to the early 1960s, and includes movies by important directors such as Fritz Lang, Ernst Lubitsch, Detlef Sierck, Helmut Käutner and Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, the namesake of the foundation. The best-known titles include THE CABINET OF DR CALIGARI (1919/20), METROPOLIS (1927), THE BLUE ANGEL (1929/30), DIE DREI VON DER TANKSTELLE (1930), MÜNCHHAUSEN (1942/43) and GROSSE FREIHEIT NR.7 (1943/44).

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